GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3401
ANSWERED ON:18.12.2015
Palliative Care
Mullappally Shri Ramachandran

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a recent report on global palliative care has ranked India at the bottom of the "Quality of Death Index", and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the reasons for low standard of palliative care services in the country; and

(c) the corrective measures taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government to frame a policy on palliative care, improve care services and raise the fund allocation for the purpose?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)
(a): In its Study Report 'The 2015 Quality of Death Index', the Economist Intelligence Unit has assessed the availability, affordability and quality of palliative care available to adults across 80 countries. In the Study Report, the countries were scored out of 100 on 20 indicators in five categories and were ranked. India is ranked 67 with a score of 26.8 in the study.

(b) & (c): To address the issues of lack of availability and accessibility of opioids for pain control and lack of education and training of healthcare providers in palliative care in the country, the Ministry of Health and Family welfare had constituted an expert group which submitted its report on'Strategies for Palliative Care in India' in November, 2012. On the basis of the Report, a framework of operational and financial guidelines was circulated to the States. As palliative care is now part of the National Health Mission, the States incorporate their proposals related with initiation/enhancement of palliative care services in their respective State Project Implementation Plans.

Moreover, certain amendments were effected in the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 in 2014, which are aimed at removing the regulatory barriers for adequate access to morphine and other opioids for medical needs such as pain relief and palliative care.